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NMPRC Nominating Committee narrows list of Commissioner applicants

Remaining candidates must complete a questionnaire further explaining qualifications

SANTA FE – The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC) Nominating Committee during an [open meeting](#) today discussed applications from more than 30 commissioner applicants, narrowing the list of candidates to 13. Before the end of the year, the committee will eventually submit the names of at least two nominees to Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, who will appoint one of them to the commission to begin a six-year term on January 1.

Additionally, Nominating Committee members approved the language to be included in an applicant questionnaire, which the remaining candidates are required to complete by September 27. The questionnaire will provide more insight into the candidate's qualifications and skills.

During a six-week recruitment period that began in July, the commissioner position attracted a strong applicant pool, thanks to a robust recruiting effort that included advertising placement in numerous print and online publications across the country as well as popular national job boards.

Overall, the Nominating Committee reviewed 32 applications, after three candidates withdrew from consideration. While reviewing applications, committee members considered education and professional requirements as well as other stipulations pertaining to the commissioner position. Candidates asked to submit a questionnaire include Maria Berio, Blessing Chukwu, Collin Gillespie, Debra Hicks, Daniel Hunnell, Diana Lindstrom, Stephen Meyer, Greg Nibert, Flavious Smith, Anibel Toboas, Colin Walcavich, Sean Wilder, and current Commissioner James Ellison. A complete list of applicants is available online [here](#).

Commissioners are pivotal in overseeing and regulating public utilities, telecommunications, and other services within the Commission's jurisdiction, and are responsible for ensuring that these services are provided in a safe, reliable, and efficient manner while balancing the interests of the public and providers. They also establish policies, approve rates, and resolve disputes to maintain fair practices and protect consumers.

Last year, the Commission transitioned from an elected panel to a governor-appointed body. The current class of three commissioners is serving terms of two, four or six years, respectively. Upon completion of these initial appointed terms, all commissioners will begin serving staggered six-year terms. The seat currently held by Commissioner Ellison, who is serving a two-year term, is up for reappointment at the end of this year.

The Nominating Committee consists of seven appointed members with a strong background in public utility regulation tasked with evaluating applicants to fill vacancies on the Commission. This bipartisan standing committee will next meet on October 9 to review the candidate questionnaires. The committee must present its list of nominees to the governor by December 1.

*The **New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC)** serves New Mexico by ensuring safe operations and reliable utility services at fair, just, and reasonable rates consistent with the State's legal, economic, environmental, and social policies. To learn more about the work of the NMPRC, please visit www.prc.nm.gov.*

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